

Section 1. Scenario

The focus of this report is to summarize a heuristic evaluation done for the new SIAT website (www.siat.sfu.ca). The site's primary user group is the general public (current and prospective students, parents, faculty, and staff members) and its purpose is to find/reach academic information about the college. Using the principles and guidelines presented by Nielsen and Pieratti, our group performed a heuristic evaluation of the website. Our objective was to find usability defects in the site as well as suggest improvements to assist the design process.

Section 2. Methodology

The evaluation process was accomplished in 3 stages. We first used Nielsen's Heuristics adapted for the web along with three of Pieratti's heuristics to create a checklist of potential usability defects. The check items are all based on the heuristics mentioned above and focus in on more specific potential problems with the website. The checklist is included in appendix 3. Our group also came up with two tasks that weren't included in the website brief. The two tasks are:

Task 11. Find the internal section of the SIAT site + submit a news item with improper information. – This task was added because we wanted to evaluate some of the error handling of the website.

Task 12. Find the cost of tuition for LAT 432. – Carol Barnum reports the results of a study showing that clear tuition costs are the most important piece of information to be included in a college or university departments website (Barnum, 377). We included this task to test if this seemingly important information had been included.

Next, we did an individual inspection of the site. Our four experts made an assessment of the web site's interface and interface's usability characteristics by referencing the checklist of usability principles that we developed earlier. Identified usability issues were carefully documented. Each expert then made a summary of the defects that occurred in their evaluation. Finally, all experts synthesized their data into a summary of the issues, which were then ranked by their severity.

Section 3. Results & Interpretation

Each of the tests from the heuristic evaluation done by the team had several similar results when evaluated together. The team used the severity rating scale that uses 4 levels by Dumas and Redish. Each of the levels severity goes by the following: Level 1: Prevents completion of a task, Level 2: creates significant delay and frustration, Level 3: has minor effect on usability and Level 4: Subtle problem; points to a future enhancement. The team thought the website can be improved on many basis because

we've found a total of 21 problems that can effect the users usability while interacting with the SFU SIAT website. There were two level 1 severity problems, six level 2 severity problems, six level 3 severity problems and seven level 4 severity problems. What could be improved throughout the website that the team came to an agreement upon was the font size and contrast of the color used. Because the font size is too small, it often decreases the efficiency of the users. The color contrast was a problem for some of us because it was sometimes illegible or tiring to be looking at it for some time. If these problems can be fixed, most of the severity problems will be solved since they are problems visually based. Another problem that the team thought was a problem was how the website structure did not have enough warning or reminders to the users. One example is that when you are about to exit the website there is no warning telling you that; this then would require you to re-login again to go back and view the internal section of the website. Another example is that the hyper-links should have some kind of visual cues that it is a link and which links the users have visited. Even though English is the default language, a multi-lingual option should be an option before entering the SFU SIAT website. The reason we thought about this is because the students or the parents of the students that attend SFU are from everywhere around the world; not everyone is very good at or can understand the English language. With the support of several major different languages, the website can be viewed by many more people and parents when English is not their first language. A few more problems that we found with the site are: that a tuition cost page needs to be shown, a help link should be visible somewhere on the website and some category headings should be more clear.

Section 4. Suggested Improvements

Our final list of usability problems could dramatically be reduced and possibly eliminated by doing a few tweaks to the interface for the website. For a more sufficient development process and a clearer understanding of the current errors, our team suggested some alternative solutions that may be included in the redesign of the interface. These suggestions are listed below.

1. Change color scheme to improve legibility. (contrast)
2. Increase the default size of the text.
3. Create a visual cue to represent links that have been visited already.
4. Update all links. Website administrators should update all links to ensure visibility. This will increase the users trust in the system.
5. Allow browser font sizing. This will increase the accessibility of the web page for a wide variety of users.

6. Support other languages, such as Chinese. Due to the high percentage of multilingual users of the site, the website administration should consider options for translating the page.

7. Create a help page. Although generally the information found on the page may not require help, some users may experience difficulties and there is not relevant connection to assist and navigate them.

8. Internal back link may be created.

9. Ensure that the system requiring log-in cannot be entered in any way after logging out. Pages requiring log in must be secured.

10. Ensure warning messages before leaving a secured site.

11. Allow links for important information to exist in more than one location. Despite information having an individual identity within the structure of the page, some information needs to be accessible from different contexts. Some of our specific examples are from the the forms page, the faculty bios, and cost of tuition information.

12. Remove redundant hyperlinking. This is explained in the summary data sheet in appendix 2.

13. Hyper links should be underlined and/or coloured so that the user may mark the link even by scanning the page.

14. Create a page or section dedicated to the tuition cost.

15. Create a link to a disclaimer or privacy policy page.

Appendix 1: Analysis of heuristic evaluation method for usability studies

This usability study was fairly successful in that we found a fair number of usability defects on the site. Most of our findings were somewhat similar, although the discrepancies that we had were easily agreed on while summarizing. We would recommend this method of usability testing again if you have a significant time or money budget (or both). This method is fairly fast and inexpensive, and also gives you recommendations as well as evaluation.

If, though, you weren't looking for a discount usability method, there are a number of reasons not to use a heuristic evaluation such as this. For one, the results rely heavily

on the experts knowledge. Despite the heuristics attempting to objectify they evaluation of the website, the results are still interpreted by the experts that you select. Thus, if you were to do this evaluation method again, you would want to have credible experts. Secondly, in a future scenario, I would recommend having a usability group come up with the heuristic evaluation checklist. Having the experts make the checklist creates bias's towards their results. Finally, giving the experts more time to complete the evaluation would give better results. All of the experts in this evaluation attempted to do all of the tasks in one sitting. This created some fatigue and likely lead to slightly inaccurate results. In future evaluations it would be good to recommend doing approximately 4 or 5 tasks per sitting.

Appendix 2: Raw data

Summary Data Sheet				
Project: Heuristic Evaluation of the new SIAT website				
Evaluators: Connor Lowe, Fu-Wei Andy Kuo, Veronika Tzankova				
Date: September 18, 2007				
Usability defect description	Found by Evaluators:	Evaluator's comments regarding defect	Severity Rating	Recommendations
Hyper-links do not show strong enough emphasize that it is being mouse-over	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	Users might not be able to tell whether or not they are clicking on the link they want or not.	3	Create more of a emphasis such as bigger font or more of a color contrast.
The links do not change colour after they have been clicked on	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	Doesn't allow the users to recognize the pages that they have visited.	4	Create a visual cue to represent links that have been visited already.
The text lacks contrast and heirarchy.	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	The text lacks contrast and can seem 'fuzzy'. This causes the site to lack clear hierarchy. Top level hierarchy is bigger and darker, but after that all of the gray text seems to blend. The text is hard to see on the white background as well.	2	Consider creating more contrast

The user cannot change the font size of the page without severely disrupting the layout and the navigation.	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	Severely hampers accessibility.	3	Allow browser font sizing.
The website should support multi-lingual language instead of just the English Language	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	It might be hard for parents of the students to understand English	3	Support other languages such as Chinese.
There is no Help Link Visible	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	There is no way on the site to find help. In a few instances there are FAQ pages, but they often relate to content specific information.	3	Create a help page
No Back button	Connor	The back button on the browser works well in this site, so an internal back button may not be necessary.	4	Could create an internal back button.
Finding SIAT internal page	Veronika, Connor, Fu-Wei	The internal SIAT site requires a login. When user logged out and back button pressed, the system can be entered without login	4	That may create a sense of insecurity of the user and thus preventing him from using the page
Default size of the letter is too small.	Fu-Wei, Veronika	The letters depending on the users can be too small to be seen.	2	The website fonts can be bigger by 2 sizes.
No warning message before leaving the secured website.	Fu-Wei, Veronika	The system does not show a warning message when leaving a secured page forcing the user to login again.	3	That may awake a sense of insecurity in the user

<p>The category that this information is in could be confusing depending on the user.</p>	<p>Connor, Fu-Wei</p>	<p>Despite professors doing research, the only heading that the bio's for the professors is under is research faculty. If the user was looking for 'the professor' Steve DiPaola, they might be confused where to find him.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Allow links for information to exist in more than one location. ie. Have a page with all of the research faculty info, but also think about what other users might want to reach that information and how they would think that they could. It is quite possible that there should be a link for Educational Faculty as well.</p>
<p>Redundant hyperlinking. On pages that have multiple sub-sections, a list of the sections is displayed at the top of the page with the one that is currently being displayed highlighted in green. This green text is still an active hyperlink. If the user clicks on it, they are taken to the page that they were already at, and thus getting no feedback about anything happening.</p>	<p>Connor</p>	<p>This could cause users to be confused about their actions. They might think that the link is broken and that they are missing some information.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Change these links to be static.</p>

When an error is detected in a data entry field, the system does not place the cursor in that field or highlight it.	Connor, Fu-Wei	Doing this would point the users exactly to where their error is.	4	The system should highlight the content in the first field with mistakes.
There is no indicator that tells the user that a new window will open when the user clicks on 'View Live Map'	Connor	It would be good to let the user know that they are opening a new window if they are	4	Include an icon that suggests an external link.
All Tasks	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	Links to different areas within the site do not follow any of the established web standards. Links are visually undistinguishable. The only indications that a link exists are that both the user's cursor and the page's link change state when the user moves their mouse over an appropriate area	2	Hyper links should be underlined and/or coloured so that the user may mark the link even by scanning the page
There is no tuition cost link anywhere on the website.	Connor, Fu-Wei, Veronika	Will force users to call the univeristy for pricing which creates hassel and delay.	1	There should be a page or section dedicated to the tuition cost.
Links to similar file types are styled differently	Connor	Here: http://www.siat.sfu.ca/grad/admissions/?slide=2	4	Style them the same.

<p>The category to find the form isn't logical. Rather than the forms being organized by their content, they are organized by being a form.</p>	<p>Connor, Fu-Wei</p>	<p>This makes sense to users who have used the system and understand where the forms are, but, when looking for a form, the user likely isn't thinking, 'I need to fill out a form'. The user, more likely is thinking of the task that they are trying to complete, more specifically the content of the form.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>We suggest that the forms exist in 'form central' but also get linked to in other logical areas.</p>
<p>Can't bookmark a page in the internal section. If a user attempts to visit bookmarked page within the internal section and isn't logged in, they will be re-directed to the log in page. After processing the log in, the user is taken to the SIAT internal site main page.</p>	<p>Connor</p>	<p>Creates meaningless bookmarks</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Get login page to re-direct the user to the intended page.</p>

The users are not aware of who can access the content that they provide when submitting.	Connor, Fu-Wei	It mentions that their projects will be shared in the gallery, but does not say who has access to their contact information. This could create an un-trust between the user and the system.	4	Create a link to a disclaimer or privacy policy page.
Find the internal section of the SIAT site + find out where current SIAT graduate students can get funding from	Fu-Wei, Veronika	The link to the funding was broken	1	First, funding is one of the components that should be found on an academic webpage - lack of such information may cause confusion in the user. Second, broken link should be prevented

Expert Evaluators Data Sheet			
Project: Heuristic Evaluation		Date: September 18th, 2007	
Evaluator: Andy			
<i>Task & Specific Location in Task</i>	<i>Heuristic Broken</i>	<i>Usability Defect Description</i>	<i>Evaluator's Comments Regarding Defect</i>
All Tasks through out the whole website	1.2 - Are the mouse-over links show a contrast in color or size than other non-mouse over links?	The color contrast doesn't show enough color difference from it's original color	A different color which shows more contrast and difference should be used instead
All tasks through out the whole website	1.4 - Do the links change color after they have been clicked on?	The links doesn't stay as a different color after it has been clicked; instead, it changes back to it's original color when clicking on another link	The link color shouldn't change back to it's original color so that it can remind the users that they have clicked and visited that link before.
All tasks through out the whole website	3.3 - Can users change the font size of the letters in the website without screwing up the page layout?	The bigger the words, it will overlap other links and picture	They should adjust the font sizes so that it won't affect the page layout

All tasks through out the whole website	3.4 - Is there a function or option to translate the website language into another foregin language?	Only the English language is supported.	Because SFU have many students from different countries, not everyone would understand the English language. They should have several different major languages supporting the website.
All tasks through out the whole website	4.1 - Are links that leads to a download-able file show a different in color, size or font style from the rest?	Download-able links and non download-able links all look the same.	They should some how make a difference or show that certain links doesn't link to a download-able file or the ones that can.
All tasks through out the whole website	4.2 - Do all the topics headings have different size, style or color from its body paragraph?	Topics and body paragraph are sometimes hard to tell apart.	Topics and headings should be at least a size or two bigger from the body paragraph.
All tasks through out the whole website	5.2 - Does the website show a warning before you leave the secured website? (Ex. When you click a link that sends you into another URL)	The website doesn't warn you when you have navigated or will be navigated out of their website.	They should have a pop up window at first preventing you from exiting the website and then let you choose if you want to exit or not.
All tasks through out the whole website	6.2.Are hyperlinks clearly marked	The hyperlinks look like topics and headings.	Hyperlinks that leads you to a different page should be underlined or be different color just to tell them apart from topics.
All tasks through out the whole website	10.2. Is the help link visible?	The help link can not be found right away on the page.	The help link needs to be visible and easy to find on the website.
All tasks through out the whole website	12.3 – Is the default font size large enough to be legible?	The current font size is too small for elderly people to read.	Make the font size 2 sizes bigger
3. Find Steve DiPaola's faculty bio + email address	2.1 - Are the topics categorized under headings that are easy to follow and to understand?	I could not find the topic heading for Professors	There should be a headings named "Professors Bio" instead of "Faculty".
9. Find the internal section of the SIAT site + find out where current SIAT graduate students can get funding from	2.1 - Are the topics categorized under headings that are easy to follow and to understand?	Got it confused with grants and didn't see funding.	Should have a topic named "Graduate Funding".

10. Find the internal section of the SIAT site + relay the instructions for uploading your student projects to the SIAT student projects gallery space	5.4 - When important information has been entered incorrectly, does the website stop the user from continuing forward? (Ex.when entering a telephone number with a missing number or an invalid e-mail address)	It didn't recognize the input of a invalid telephone number.	It should recognize the input of a valid telephone number.
11. Find the internal section of the SIAT site + submit a news item with improper information.	11.3 – Are the users aware of the visibility of the content that they upload?	It didn't say anything about the visibilty of the content that users are uploading.	It should inform the user before uploading.
12. Find the cost of tuition for IAT 432.	13.1 – Does the navigation make is easy to find important tasks?	There is no tuition page.	A link to the tuition page should be on the website for easy access.

Expert Evaluators Data Sheet			
Project: Heuristic Evaluation of SIAT Website		Date: Sept. 18/07	
Evaluator: Connor Lowe			
<i>Task & Specific Location in Task</i>	<i>Heuristic Broken</i>	<i>Usability Defect Description</i>	<i>Evaluator's Comments Regarding Defect</i>
All Tasks: Throughout the whole website	Visibility of System Status	The links do not change colour after they have been clicked on	create a visual cue to represent inks that have been visited already.
All Tasks: Throughout the whole website	User control and freedom	The user cannot change the font size of the page without severely disrupting the layout and the navigation.	This is a very prominent accessibility feature of web browsers, and should be functional on this site. Especially with a site that's layout is based on using text.
All Tasks: Throughout the website	User control and freedom	The user cannot change the language of the copy.	Might not be that important considering the intended audience.

All Tasks: Throughout the website	Recognition rather than recall	Hyperlinks are not clearly marked.	Hyperlinked and non-hyperlinked text is displayed the same throughout the page. The difference is that the hyperlinked text has a mouseover state. This subtle difference might not be enough to intuitively show the user where hyperlinks are. Moreover, I think that the hover state might lack contrast and be difficult to recognize on certain monitors.
All Tasks in SIAT's public page	Flexibility and efficiency of use	This part does not support quick links	The internal page does provide quick links, so one could assume that the expert users would also be the ones that were using that page. None the less, it would be good to see some functionality for expert users on the main page.
All Tasks in SIAT's public page	Aesthetics & minimalist design	The colour scheme is overtaken by the SFU header. The subtle grays and greens that are used lack contrast and are not easily distinguishable.	Create more contrast and / or hierarchy using slightly colours and font styles.
All Tasks: Throughout the website	Help & Documentation	There is no Help Link Visible	There is no way on the site to find help. In a few instances there are FAQ pages, but they often relate to content specific information.
All Tasks: Throughout the Website	Readability & Legibility	The text lacks contrast.	The text lacks contrast and can seem 'fuzzy'. Due to this, the site also lacks clear hierarchy. Top level hierarchy is bigger and darker, but after that all of the gray text seems to blend. Consider creating more hierarchy with a broader colour scheme.

All Tasks: Throughout the Website	User control & freedom	No Back button	The back button on the browser works well in this site, so an internal back button may not be necessary.
Task 3: Find Steve DiPaola's faculty bio + email address	Information Structure	The category that this information is in could be confusing depending on the user. Despite professors doing research, the only heading that the bio's for the professors is under is research faculty. If the user was looking for 'the professor' Steve DiPaola, they might be confused where to find him.	Allow links for information to exist in more than one location. ie. Have a page with all of the research faculty info, but also think about what other users might want to reach that information and how they would think that they could. It is quite possible that there should be a link for Educational Faculty as well.
All Tasks: Throughout the Website	Error Prevention	Redundant hyperlinking. On pages that have multiple sub-sections, a list of the sections is displayed at the top of the page with the one that is currently being displayed highlighted in green. This green text is still an active hyperlink. If the user clicks on it, they are taken to the page that they were already at, and thus getting no feedback about anything happening.	Change them to be static text.
Task 5: Find SIAT's mailing address, main phone number & a map of where the campus is	Recognition rather than recall	There is no indicator that tells the user that a new window will open when the user clicks on 'View Live Map'	Include an icon that suggests an external link.
Task 6: Advise how + when to apply to the SIAT graduate program, and who to contact if you have any questions about applying Usability Inc. Project Brief 2	Consistency and Standards	Links to similar file types are styled differently	Style them the same.

<p>Task 8: Find the internal section of the SIAT site + find the graduate "Change of Supervisory Committee" form for current graduate students</p>	<p>Information Structure</p>	<p>The category to find the form isn't logical. Rather than the forms being organized by their content, they are organized by being a form</p>	<p>This makes sense to users who have used the system and understand where the forms are, but, when looking for a form, the user likely isn't thinking, 'I need to fill out a form'. The user, more likely is thinking of the task that they are trying to complete, more specifically the content of the form. Therefore I would suggest that the forms exist in 'form central' but also get linked to in other logical areas.</p>
<p>Task 8: Find the internal section of the SIAT site + find the graduate "Change of Supervisory Committee" form for current graduate students</p>	<p>Flexibility and efficiency of use</p>	<p>Can't bookmark a page in the internal section. If a user attempts to visit bookmarked page within the internal section and isn't logged in, they will be re-directed to the log in page. After processing the log in, the user is taken to the SIAT internal site main page.</p>	<p>Direct users to their intended location after logging in.</p>
<p>Task 10: Find the internal section of the SIAT site + relay the instructions for uploading your student projects to the SIAT student projects gallery space</p>	<p>Privacy</p>	<p>The users are not aware of who can access the content that they provide when submitting. It mentions that their projects will be shared in the gallery, but does not say who has access to their contact information.</p>	<p>Provide a link to a disclaimer.</p>
<p>Task 11: Find the internal section of the SIAT site + submit a news item with improper information.</p>	<p>Help users recognize diagnose and recover from errors</p>	<p>When an error is detected in a data entry field, the system does not place the cursor in that field or highlight it.</p>	<p>The system should highlight the content in the first field with mistakes.</p>

Task 12: Find the cost of tuition for IAT 432.	Information Structure	The system does not display or even link to the cost of programs.	Considering the relevance of cost to the planning process of post-secondary education, the site should provide financial information or a link to the SFU page with financial information.
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Expert Evaluators Data Sheet			
Project:Heuristic Evaluation of SIAT website Evaluator:Veronika Tzankova		Date:Sept,19,2007	
<i>Task & Specific Location in Task</i>	<i>Heuristic Broken</i>	<i>Usability Defect Description</i>	<i>Evaluator's Comments Regarding Defect</i>
All tasks	Consistency and standards	There is not enough contrast between the background and fonts colours, that makes it difficult to user to read the verbal information.	Changing the colours of background/fonts so that there is much contrast
	Consistency and standards	Links to different areas within the site do not follow any of the established web standards. Links are visually undistinguishable. The only indications that a link exists are that both the user's cursor and the page's link change state when the user moves their mouse over an appropriate area	Hyper links should be underlined and/or coloured so that the user may mark the link even by scanning the page

	User Control and Freedom	The system restricts the user from changing the width and size of the interface. The use of a fixed resolution makes the user unable to resize the window to fit their display (when using Internet Explorer) or changing size without destroying the layout of the page(when using Mozilla Firefox)	The system should maintain different font sizing.
	Consistency and standards/Recognition rather than recall.	Used links do not change colour	Links that have been selected should change colour. Not changing colour may force the user rather to recall than recognize
	Error Prevention	Some dead links appear within the site.	This may cause user distrust in the quality of information.
	Consistency and standards	The home link is quite invisible	Usually home links are situated at the top of the page as in our case the home link can be found at the bottom of the site surrounded by other links in the same size and colour which makes it hard for the user to find her/his way "home"
	Consistency and standards	The density of the page is too light-weighted	The poor verbal information on the main page may create a sense of "lightness" in the user and thus making him/her to move to another page
	Consistency and standards	The default font size is not big enough to be easily legible	The default font size should be in a size that is easy for the average user to read
Finding SIAT internal page	<u>User control and freedom</u>	The internal SIAT site requires a login. When user logged out and backbutton pressed, the system can be entered without login	That may create a sense of insecurity of the user and thus preventing him from using the page

. Find the internal section of the SIAT site + find out where current SIAT graduate students can get funding from	User control and freedom /Error prevention	The link to the funding was broken	First, funding is one of the components that should be found on an academic webpage - lack of such information may cause confusement in the user. Second, broken link should be prevented
All tasks	User control and freedom	The system does not show warning message when leaving a secured page	That may awake a sense of insecurity in the user

Appendix 3: Heuristics Checklist

Heuristic Evaluation Checklist

1. Visibility of system status - The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

Yes No N / A Comments

1.1 - Do selected headings have bigger fonts than the non-selected topics?

1.2 - Are the mouse-over links show a contrast in color or size than other non-mouse over links?

1.3 - Is there a navigation bar showing the user their whereabouts?

1.4 - Do the links change color after they have been clicked on?

2. Match between system and the real world - The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

Yes No N / A Comments

2.1 - Are the topics categorized under headings that are easy to follow and to understand?

2.2 - Are the commands/instructions easy to follow and to understand?

3. User control and freedom - Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.

Yes No N / A Comments

3.1 - Is there a "back" button for users to go back to the previous page they have just visited?

3.2 - Can users go back and forth freely if they need to change certain information on a certain page without changing other information on other windows?

3.3 - Can users change the font size of the letters in the website without screwing up the page layout?

3.4 - Is there a function or option to translate the website language into another foreign language?

4. Consistency and standards - Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions. -Are different colors used to show what links can be downloaded and what cannot be downloaded?

Yes No N / A Comments

4.1 - Are links that leads to a download-able file show a different in color, size or font style from the rest?

4.2 - Do all the topics headings have different size, style or color from its body paragraph?

4.3 - Does all the pages have similar layout, font, style and color?

5. Error prevention - Even better than good error messages is a careful design, which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place. Either eliminates error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

Yes No N / A Comments

5.1 - Does a error message pop up when a non-click-able link has been clicked or broken?

5.2 - Does the website show a warning before you leave the secured website? (Ex. When you click a link that sends you into another URL)

5.3 - When error messages are given, is there a suggested solution to the problem that has occurred?

5.4 - When important information has been entered incorrectly, does the website stop the user from continuing forward? (Ex.when entering a telephone number with a missing number or an invalid e-mail address)

6.Recognition rather than recall – Minimize the user's memory load by making objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

	Yes	No	N / A	Comments
6.1.Have items been grouped into logical zones and have headings been used to distinguish between zones				
6.2.Are hyperlinks clearly marked				
6.3.Does the system provide mapping				

7.Flexibility and efficiency of use - Accelerators -- unseen by the novice user -- may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.

	Yes	No	N / A	Comments
7.1. Does the system support novice and expert users by providing quick links?				
7.2. Does the website support bookmarks on every page?				
7.3. Does the website support semantic URL`s?				

8.Aesthetics & minimalist design - Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

	Yes	No	N / A	Comments
8.1. Is the verbal information displayed on the screen enough for decision making?				
8.2. Have large objects, bold lines been used to define different areas?				
8.3. Are fields labels brief familiar & descriptive?				
8.4. Is each lower menu choice associated with the one higher level menu?				

9.Help users recognize diagnose and recover from errors - Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

Yes No N / A Comments

9.1.Are errors messages in an appropriate language?

9.2 If an error is detected in a data entry field, does the system place the cursor in that field or highlight it?

10.Help and documentation - Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.

Yes No N / A Comments

10.1. Are online instructions visually distinct?

10.2. Is the help link visible?

10.3. Is the visual layout well designed?

11. Privacy – Does the Web site help protect personal and private information and interactions?

Yes No N / A Comments

11.1 – Does the site hold private information?

11.2 – If so, is the content protected with a password?

11.3 – Are the users aware of the visibility of the content that they upload?

12. Readability and legibility – Is the text readable?

Yes No N / A Comments

12.1 – Does the text have enough contrast to be legible by a wide array of users?

12.2 – Does the web page support multiple font sizes?

12.3 – Is the default font size large enough to be legible?

13. Information Structure – Is the information ordered into a hierarchy based on precedence, significance, and frequency of use? Does the underlying structure support intended functions, which are based on user tasks, goals, and needs?

Yes No N / A Comments

13.1 – Does the navigation make is easy to find important tasks?

13.2 – Does the site make an obvious distinction between sections and sub-sections?

13.3 – Is the hierarchy of information customized for specific users?